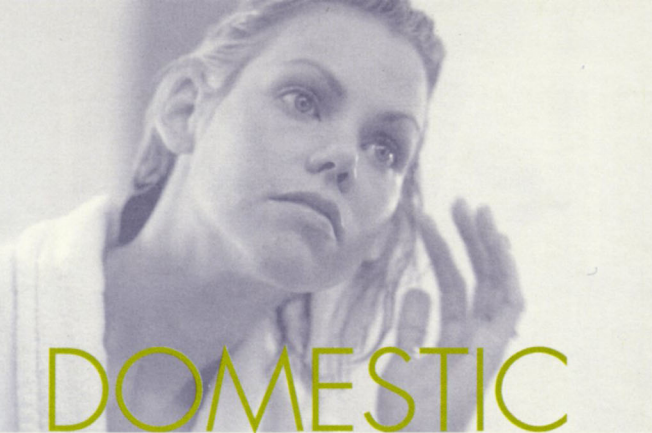




I WILL

be

safe



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAN

...impact your life

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHOULD NOT BE

A "FAMILY SECRET." If your partner keeps you from your friends or constantly puts you down, it's abuse. If he threatens you, hits or rapes you, it's a crime.

Victims of domestic violence may feel depressed, stressful, frightened, or angry. They may have trouble sleeping or eating and may experience frequent headaches or feel tired all the time.

Victims may lose interest in things that they once found appealing and may find it hard to function day-to-day.

Victims of domestic violence are sometimes seriously injured or even killed by their abusers. In fact, one in three murdered women is killed by a husband, boyfriend or the father of her child.



Victims often stay in abusive relationships because they are afraid, isolated from their friends and family, and don't have the money to start a new life. They also stay because they love the abuser, even though they hate the abuse. In other situations, victims stay in the abusive relationship because they share a child with the abuser or because they feel responsible for the abuse.



...impact your pregnancy

Domestic violence is not likely to stop just because the victim is pregnant. Often, the violence gets worse during this time, placing both the mother's health and the pregnancy at risk. It is important to know that homicide is the leading cause of pregnancy-associated death.

Victims of domestic violence who are pregnant may not get the prenatal care they need because the abuser will not allow them to go to the doctor or seek other medical services. The trauma associated with domestic violence can lead to premature labor, miscarriages, and low birth weight babies.



...impact your children

Children are abused in at least half of the homes where domestic violence takes place. In fact, the presence of domestic violence in a home is the single greatest risk factor for child abuse.

Domestic violence impacts children even if they are not the targets of the abuse. Children who witness domestic violence may feel bad about themselves, be depressed or angry, and may be sick more often than other children. Infants exposed to domestic violence may not develop attachments to their caretakers that are critical for development. Preschool children in violent homes may not want their mothers to leave their sight and not want to talk to or play with other children.

....reaching out... There are many **resources** available to you and your children.

THE POLICE: If you are in immediate danger, contact your county or city police department, sheriff, or the Kentucky State Police.

VICTIM ADVOCACY SERVICES: Your local community is served by both a Domestic Violence Program (shelter) and a Rape Crisis Center. The shelter provides safe temporary housing for victims and their children fleeing dangerous homes and offers a variety of support services. The Rape Crisis Center can assist

victims of sexual violence through counseling, court and medical advocacy and referral information. You can find phone numbers for these services in your yellow pages or by contacting the National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-SAFE** to locate a domestic violence shelter or the RAINN Hotline at **1-800-656-HOPE** to be connected to your local Rape Crisis Center. The Department for Community Based Services also has offices located in each county that offer advocacy services to spouse abuse victims.

THE COURT: Victims of domestic violence can file a petition with the court to seek an emergency protective order to provide temporary protection from the offender. You can file for an EPO 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Contact the District Court clerk's office, local police department, or Domestic Violence Program (shelter) for assistance.

HOW TO STAY SAFE AFTER YOU LEAVE:

- Understand that your partner may be particularly dangerous after you are gone and may still harass, stalk or hurt you or your children.
- Get a protective order from the court and keep a copy with you at all times.
- Call the police if your partner violates the protective order.
- Decide who is safe to tell about your situation, including your employer, family, or friends.
- Participate in battered women's support groups, counseling or other services provided by your local victim services agencies.
- Remember, you are not alone.

..... you **cannot control**
your partner's behavior,
but you do **have choices**
... about how to **respond** ...

a safety plan

A safety plan can help you prepare for dangerous situations with your partner.

It can also assist you in staying safe if you have already gotten away from your abuser. (See above.)

Your local domestic violence shelter and other professionals in your community can assist you in putting together a comprehensive plan that can help to keep you and your children safe.

..... **remember, no one**
deserves to be abused ...

IF YOU ARE IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP:

- You are not alone.
- Talk about it with someone you trust.
- Think of a safe place to be if you sense violence is about to happen. Avoid rooms with no exits (bathroom) or rooms with weapons (kitchen).
- Program your phone with emergency numbers (domestic violence shelter, law enforcement, friends) and get a cell phone, if possible.
- Establish a "code word" or "sign" so that family, friends, teachers or co-workers know when to call for help.

IF YOU ARE LEAVING AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP:

- Make a list of possible places to go when you leave and consider ways to get out safely. (walking the dog, going to the store)
- Pack a bag with clothes, important papers and extra cash and put it in a safe place.
- Teach your children not to get involved in the violence between you and your partner and what to do in an emergency. (call 911, run to a neighbor's house)
- Keep keys and money with you at all times.



Kids Now is funded with proceeds
from the Master Tobacco Settlement



For more information,
visit the website of the Governor's Office of
Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Services
<http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/gov/domviol/toc.htm>

1 866 929 BABY

Kidsnow.ky.gov